

# THINGS CHANGE BUT STAY THE SAME

**Cities have the capability  
of providing something for  
everybody, only because,  
and only when, they are  
created by everybody.”**

Jane Jacobs

The Malthouse is a ghost of Oxford's industrial past. It lies in a hidden neighbourhood between Oxford's transport hubs and its commercial streets.

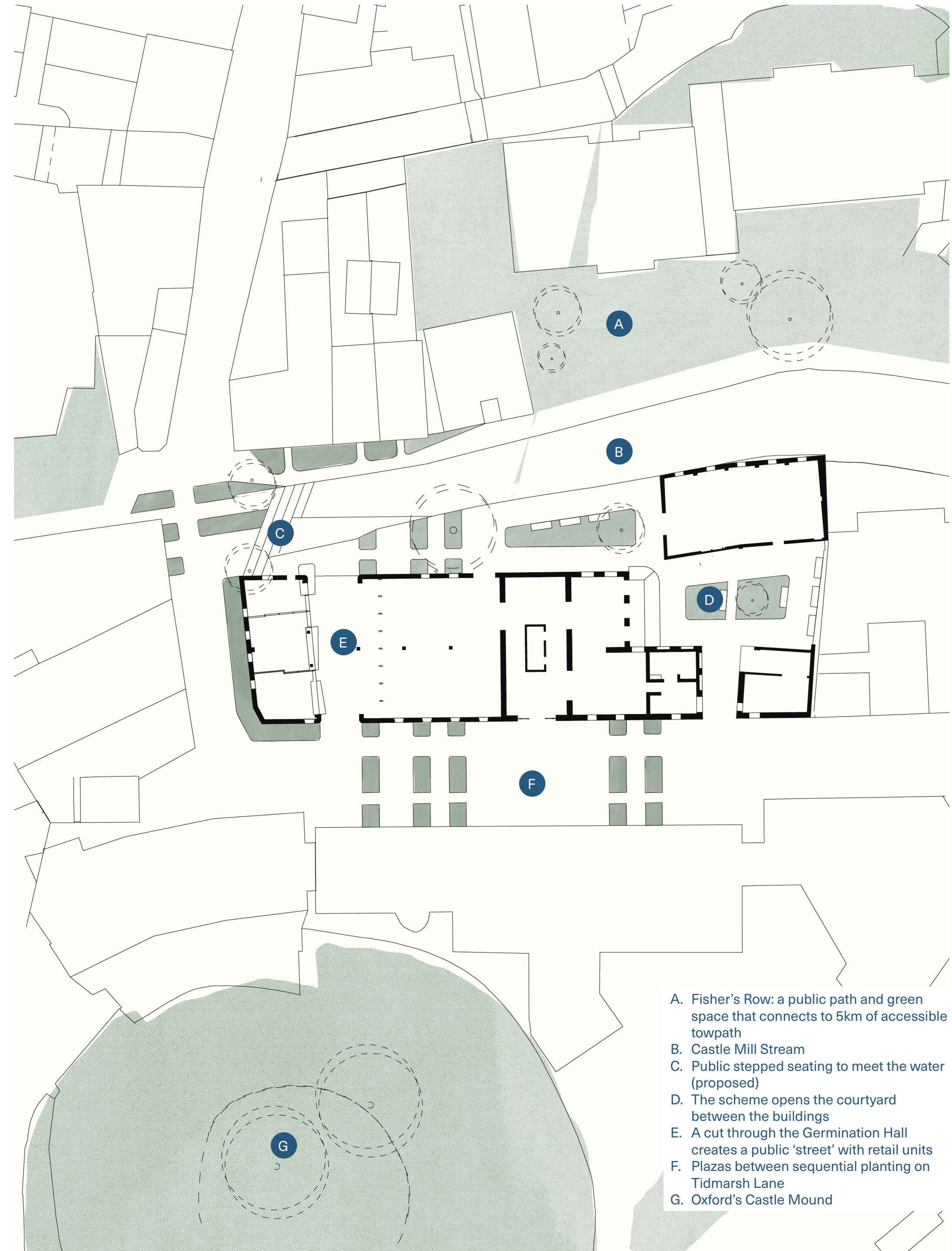
This project proposes a radical transformation of the Malthouse into a Public Design Office that puts good design at the heart of the city's civic strategy.

Using the principles of Jane Jacobs, Kevin Lynch and Jan Gehl, the Public Design Office opens access to the Malthouse and its surrounding spaces, connecting people, nature and the built environment as an exemplar that can extend throughout the city.

The first action is to create a porosity through the building to the canal-side.

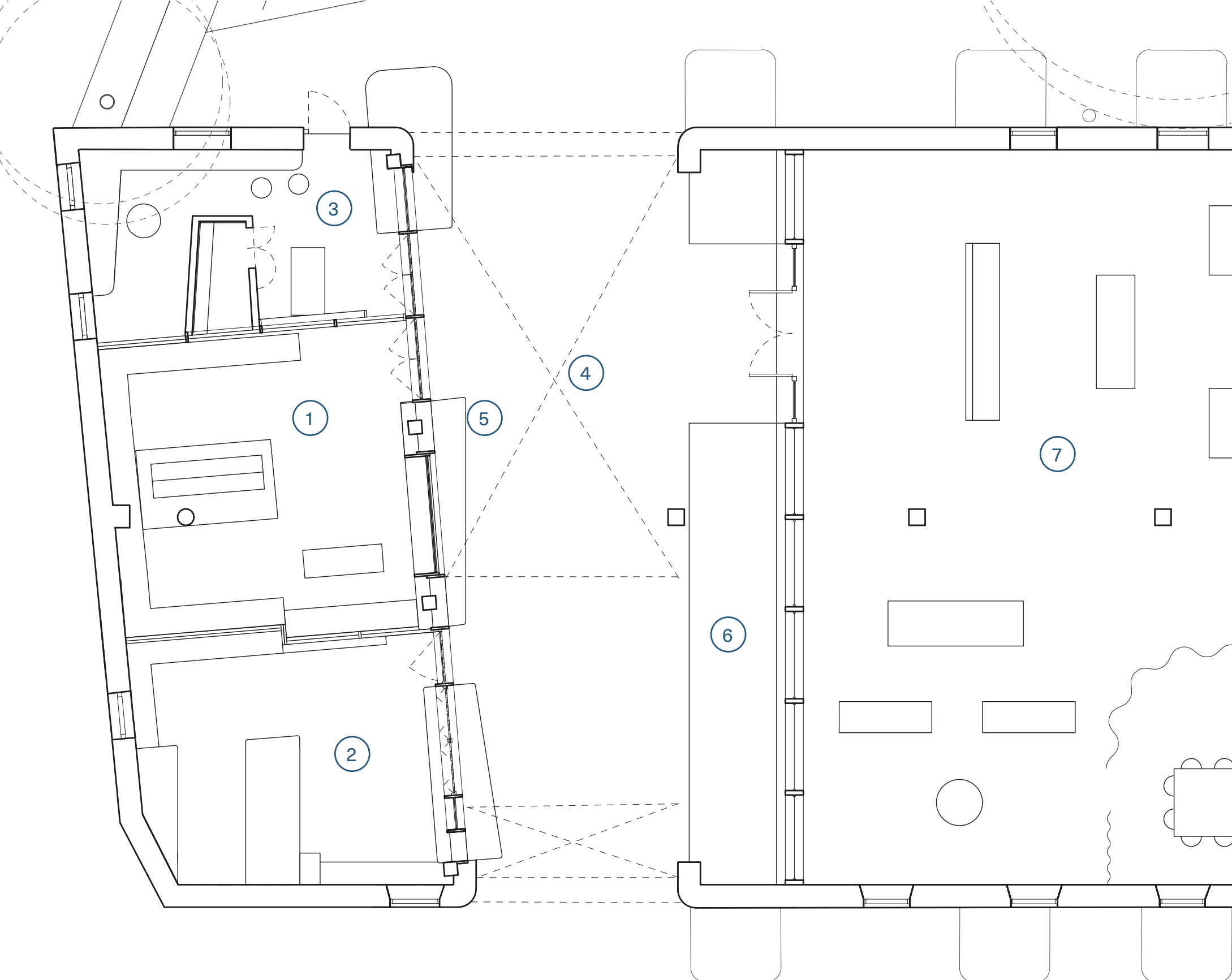
1: A visualisation of the buildings with the current gates removed, allowing public access to the sunny courtyard.

2: A sequential spacing of green spaces breaks up the corridor-like street, creating small plazas where people can linger and access the internal spaces of the Malthouse.



- A. Fisher's Row: a public path and green space that connects to 5km of accessible towpath
- B. Castle Mill Stream
- C. Public stepped seating to meet the water (proposed)
- D. The scheme opens the courtyard between the buildings
- E. A cut through the Germination Hall creates a public 'street' with retail units
- F. Plazas between sequential planting on Tidmarsh Lane
- G. Oxford's Castle Mound



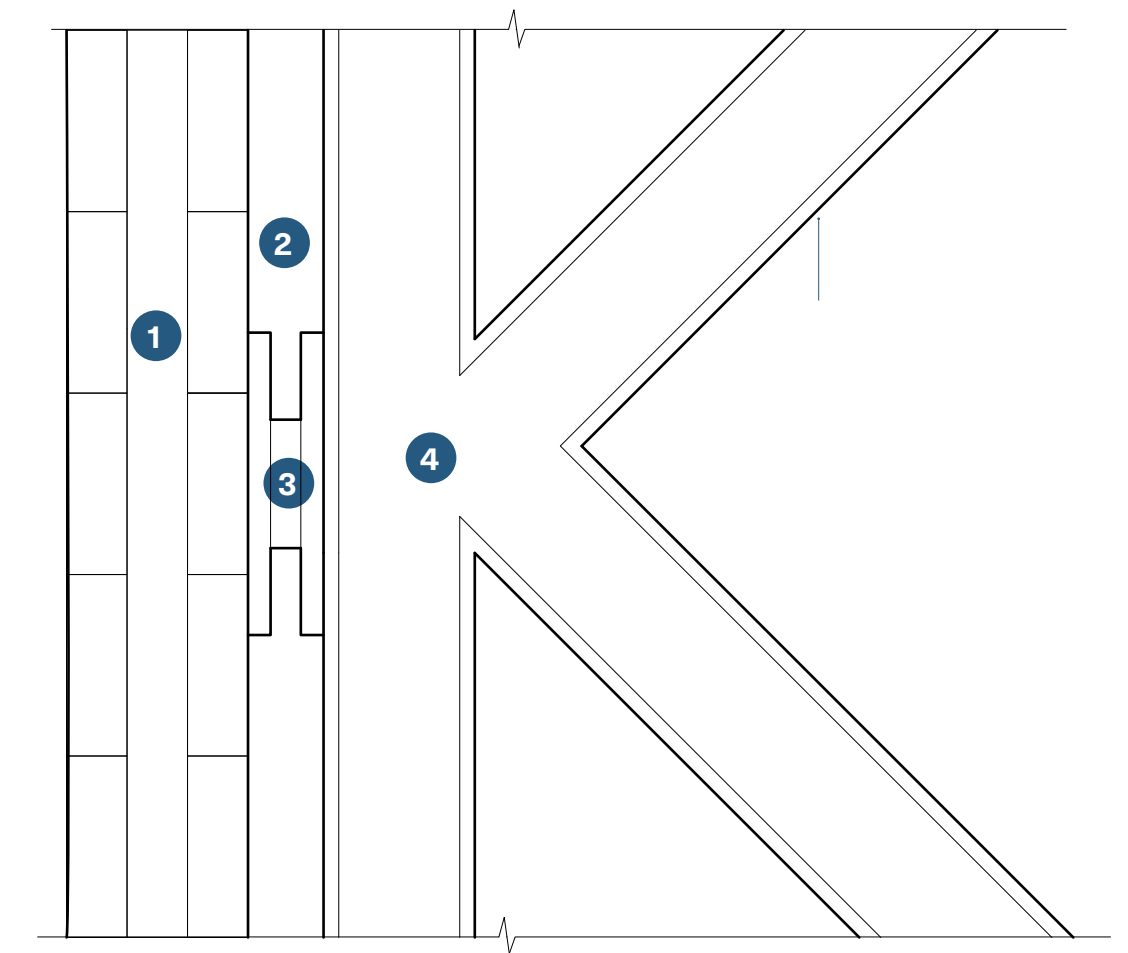


**“Life takes place on foot.  
People meet in public  
spaces. If they are inviting,  
people will use them.”**

Jan Gehl

By cutting through the Germination Hall, we can create an internal ‘street’ with destinations that meet the needs of residents, visitors and workers.

1. A book store connects people with local history and design publications
2. A stationers/confectioners - celebrating the local ‘corner shop’
3. A coffee shop: the corner unit sits next to terraced seating on the canal, this is a focus for low impact social contact with views across the canal to Fisher Row.
4. A double-height space where visitors get a glimpse of the studios above. Extra interest is provided by the translucent bridge which compresses the ceiling height momentarily and softly illuminates the space.
5. Window seats inside and outside the shops provide sheltered seating for visitors. The layout adheres to Jan Gehl’s principles by facing other areas, while protecting the backs of users.
6. Facing the shop units is a semi-internal area of Piet Oudolf inspired planting that visually connects to the outside spaces.
7. A path through the planting provides occasional access to a large gallery space.



#### Connection detail

1: CLT Panel

2: 50mm Shadow Gap

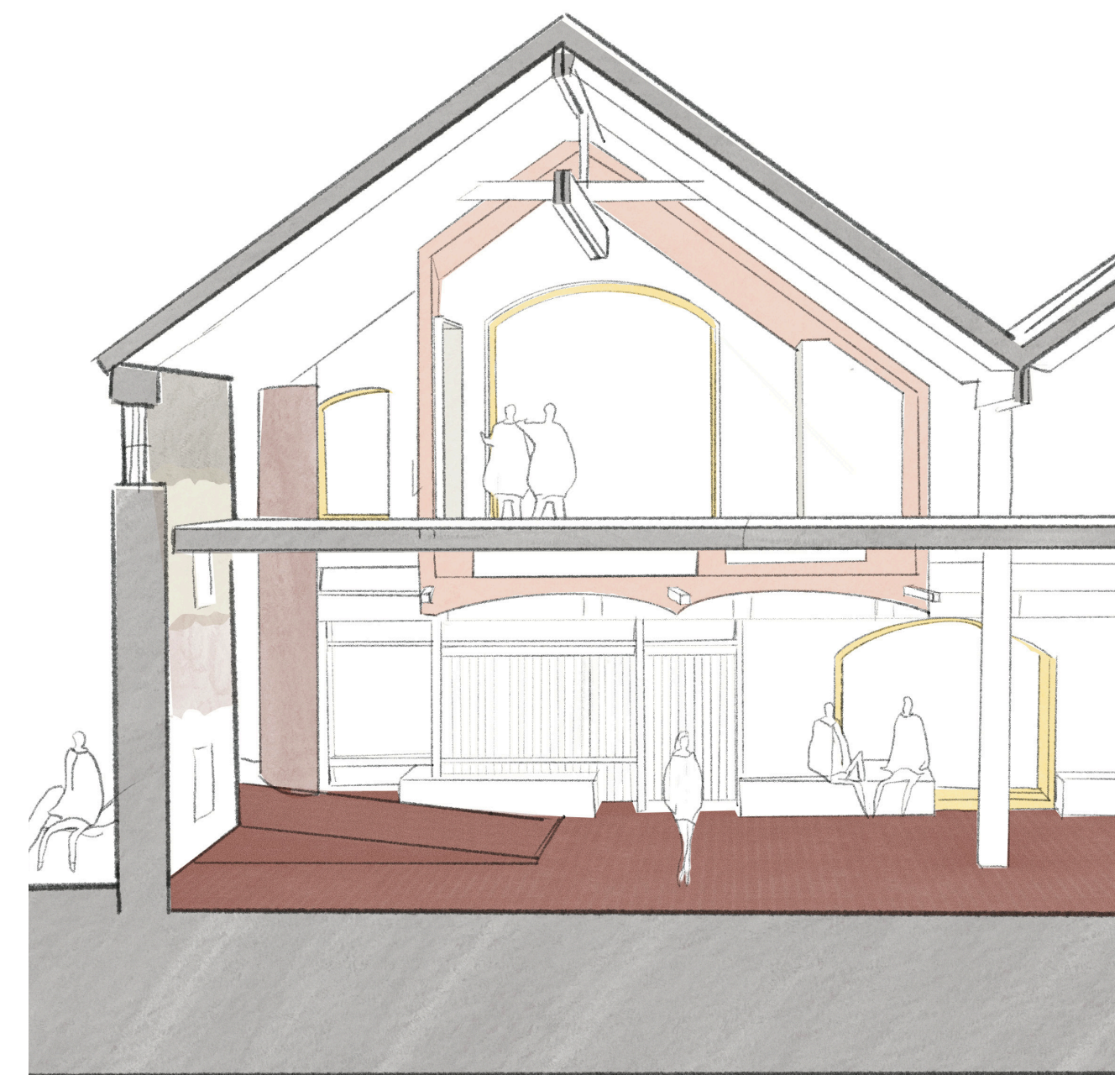
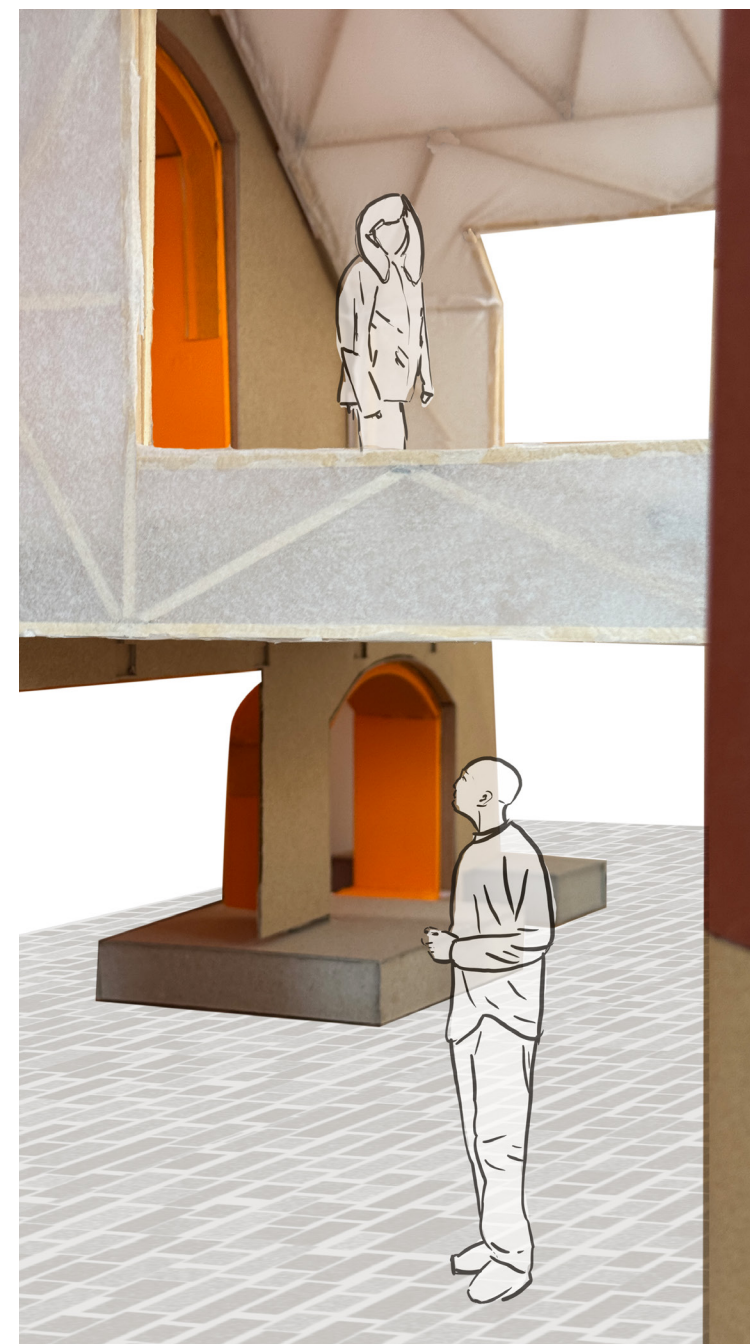
3: Steel Connector

4: Aluminium Frame

The bridge is connected to CLT wall panels with steel brackets. They allow for movement and expansion, accommodating natural material shifts while preserving a floating aesthetic.



**The passageway becomes a street  
within a building, with public activity  
at its heart.**





We shape places, but great places remember how they were shaped.



The interior of the Malthouse carefully balances public and private.

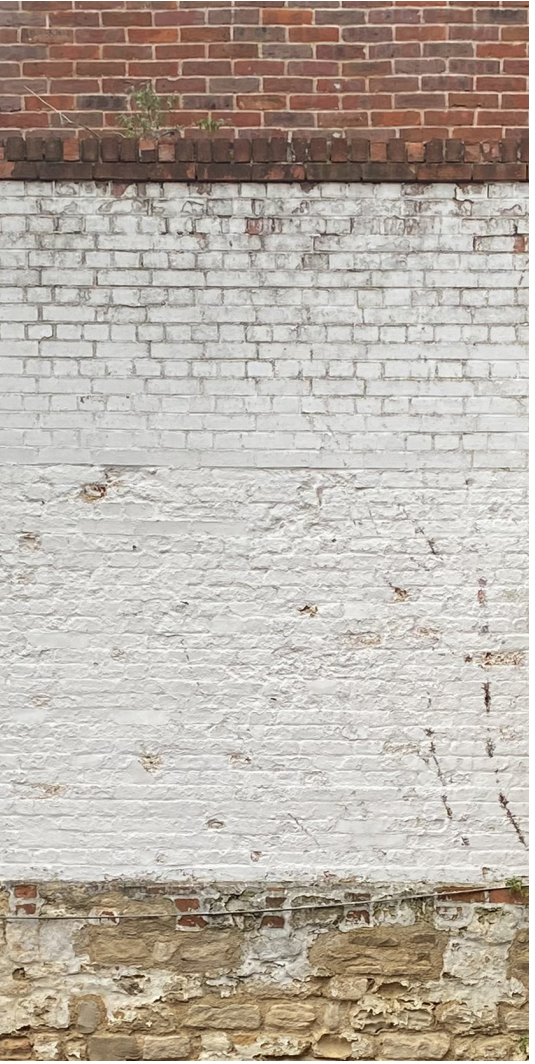
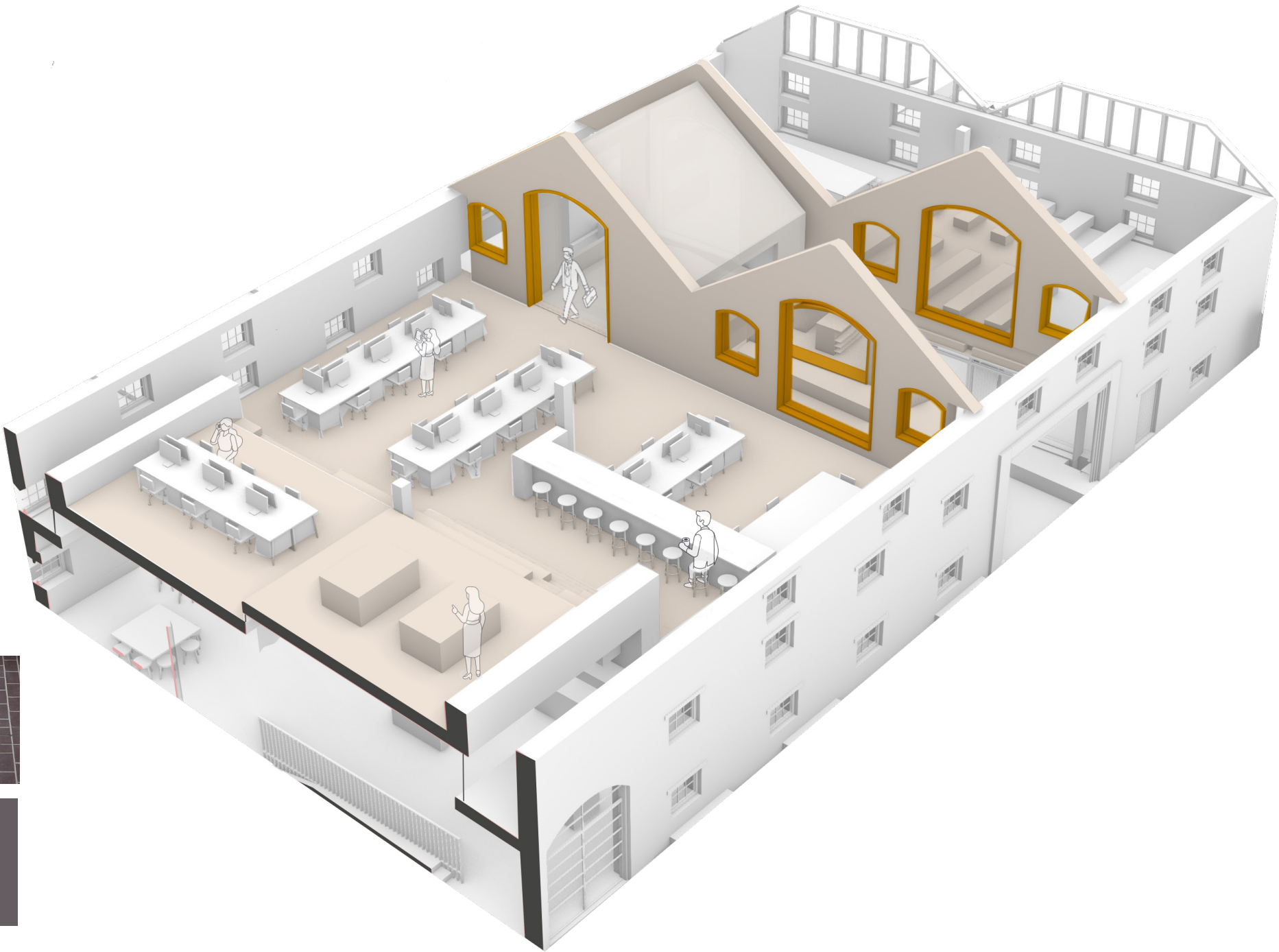
The first floor of the Germination Hall is a archetypical design studio: open-plan and adaptable for easy communication between designers, with small areas for meetings, presentation and display. Across the bridge is a social area where lectures and larger presentations can happen.

The material strategy contrasts glulam and CLT with the original palimpsest of the exiting building. It is a design that celebrates adaptive re-use and material memory.

“The future of architecture is not about using shiny new materials, but about working with what we’ve already got.”  
Duncan Baker-Brown

Materials and colour swatches for the Malthouse:

- 1: Brick with palimpsest
- 2: Glulam
- 3: CLT
- 4: RAL1004 as a paint
- 5: Kalwall composite cladding material
- 6: Quarry tiles



1: The Neues Museum, Berlin  
2, 3, 4: Architectural palimpsest at the Malthouse





**“Certain visible points, often called landmarks, become the key to the city. Sometimes they are distant and seen from many angles and distances, sometimes they are close at hand, seen only at the end of an alley. In either case, they are singling out a spot for attention and making it unforgettable.”**

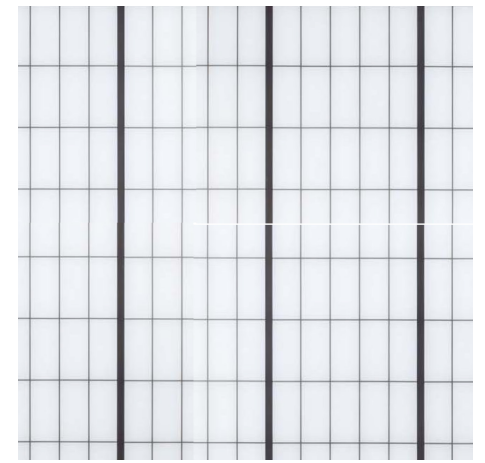
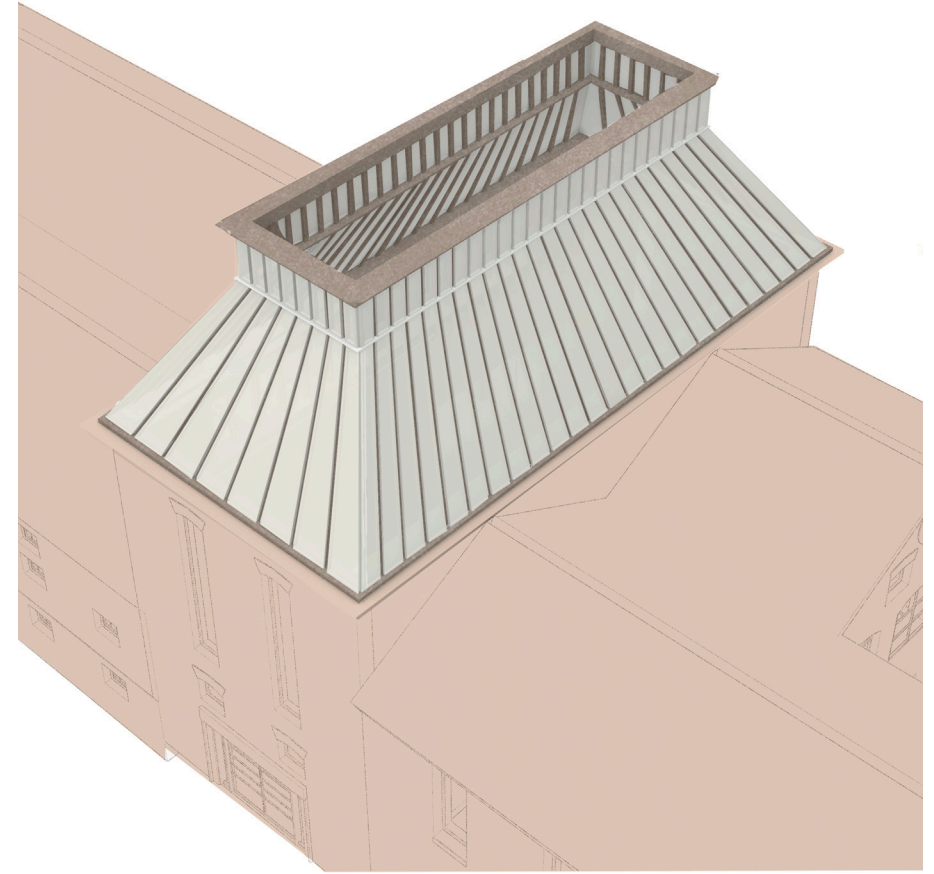
Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City

The Kiln Tower creates an opportunity for a public landmark; a plinth for a piece of public art that the city can use as a sentinel.

By rebuilding the roof using a translucent material, the design creates a lightwell through the building. This becomes a glowing beacon in the evening.

Wrapped around the cone is a piece of art commissioned from the artist Martin Creed, and inspired by his 1999 artwork 'Everything Is Going To Be Alright'. The phrase 'Things Change But Stay The Same' reflects our strategy of adaptive reuse and continuity.

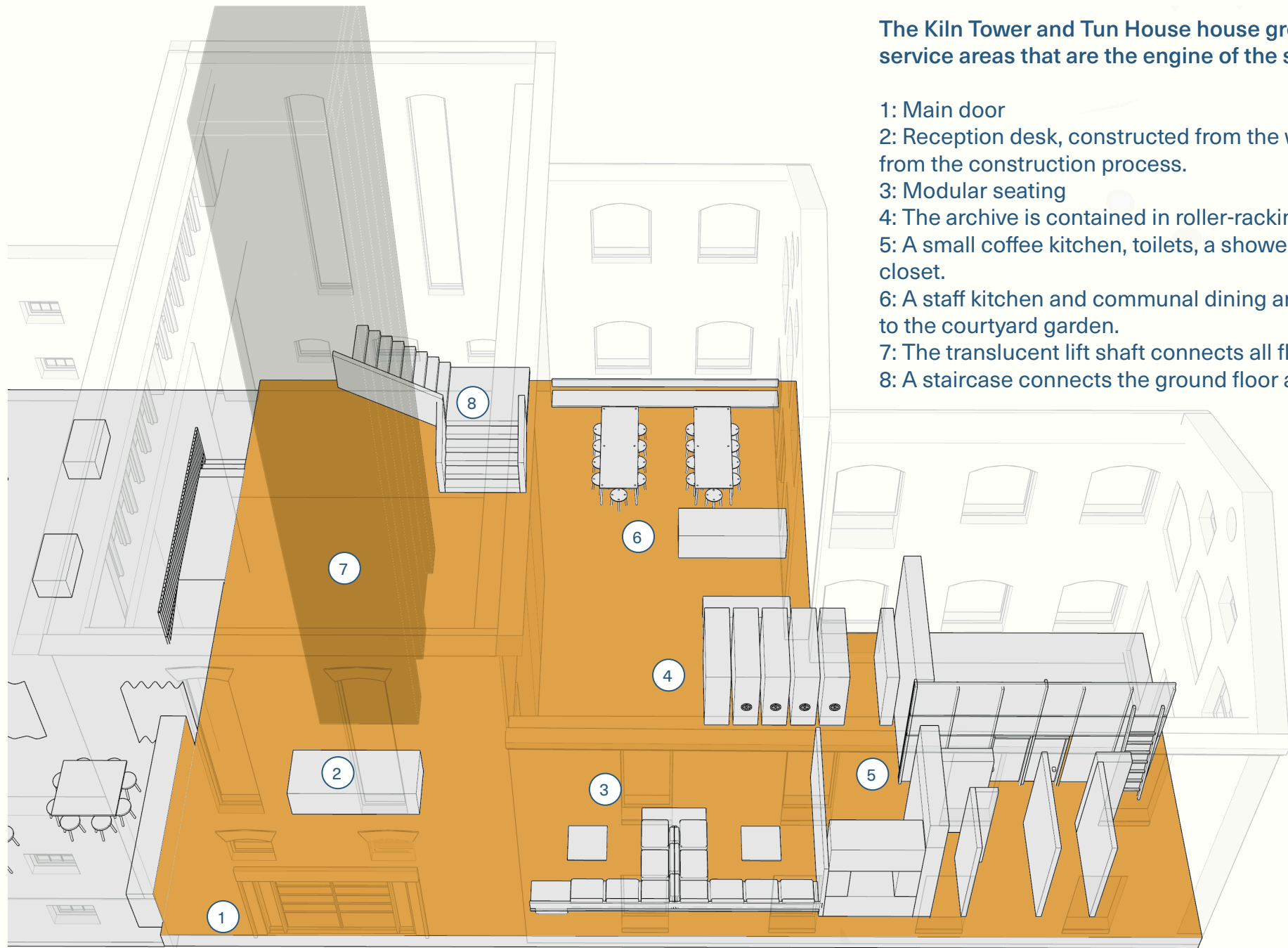
External features reflect the internal needs of the user. A lift shaft is the pinnacle of the roof cone. Revised fenestration on the Tun House (to the right of the Kiln Tower) has been redesigned to create more rhythm across the facade, while respecting the industrial heritage of the building. Windows provide maximum light where needed and bricked niches sit where privacy is needed.



Kalwall, translucent composite material

The Kiln Tower and Tun House house greeting and service areas that are the engine of the studio:

- 1: Main door
- 2: Reception desk, constructed from the waste terrazzo from the construction process.
- 3: Modular seating
- 4: The archive is contained in roller-racking shelves.
- 5: A small coffee kitchen, toilets, a shower and a janitors closet.
- 6: A staff kitchen and communal dining area opens out on to the courtyard garden.
- 7: The translucent lift shaft connects all floors
- 8: A staircase connects the ground floor and first floor



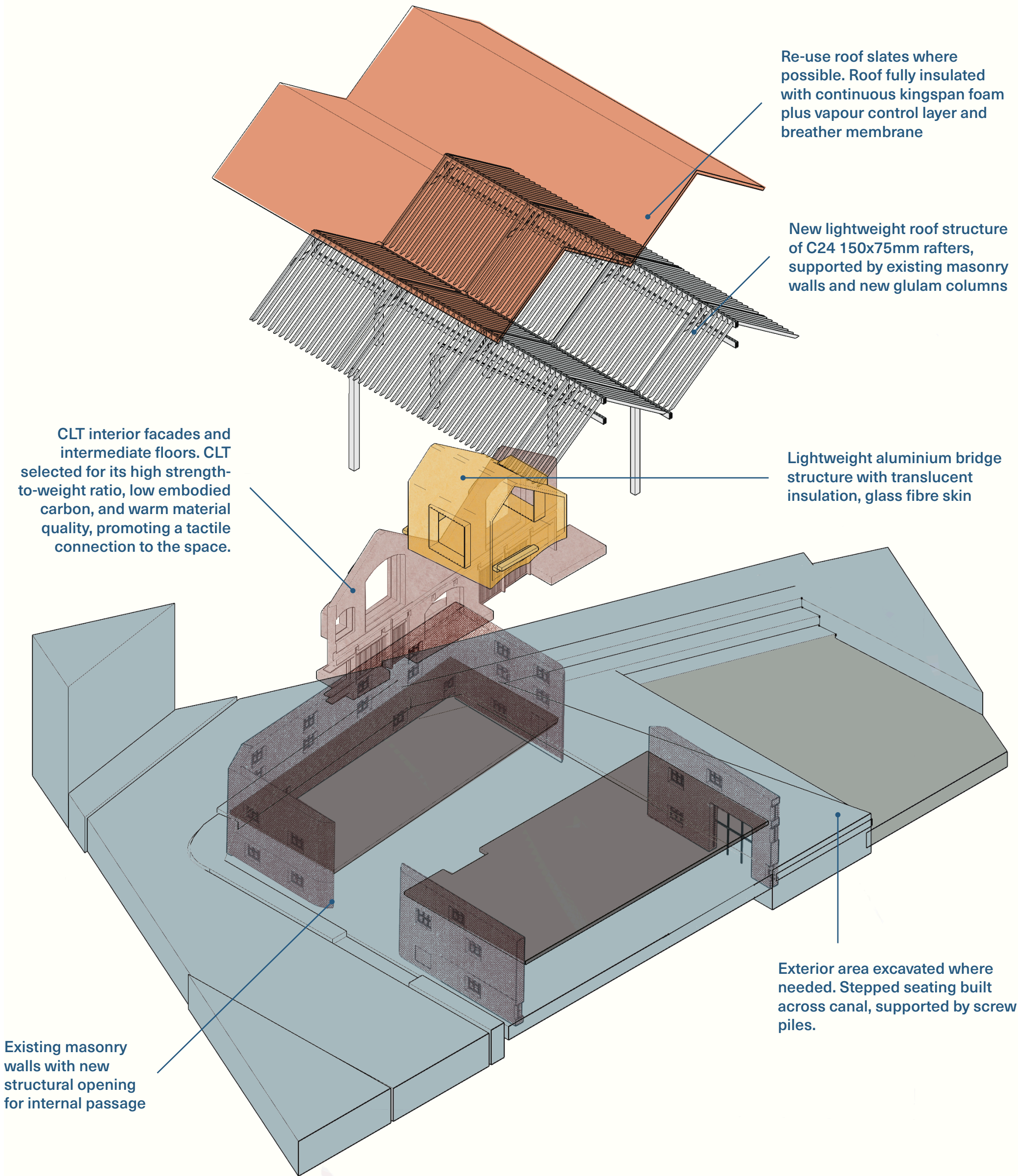


Re-using buildings is our sustainable future. It's not just about preservation; it is about creating a dialogue where the old and new coexist, challenge, and enhance each other

The redesign of the Malthouse is a careful and respectful conversation between old and new.

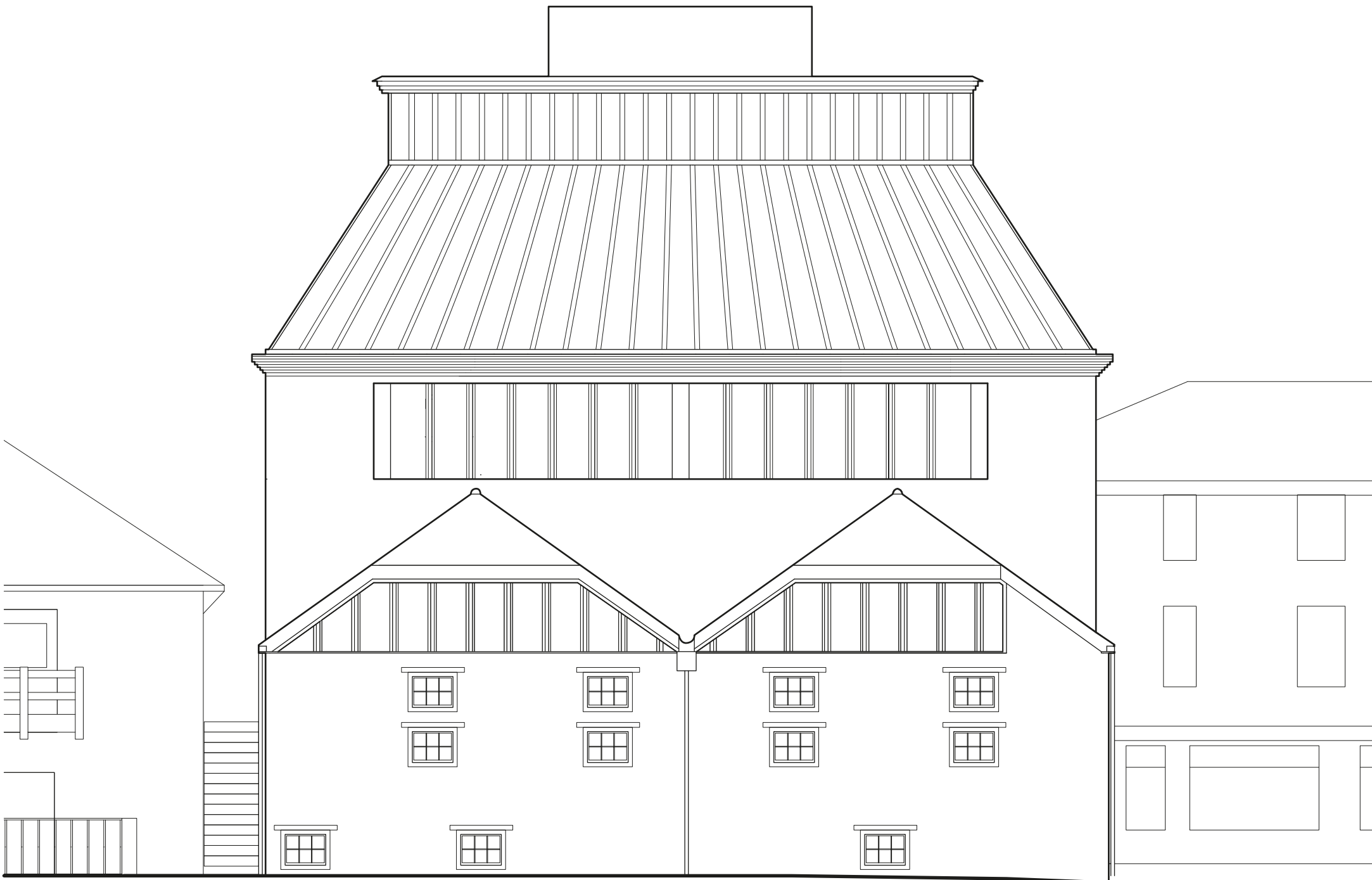
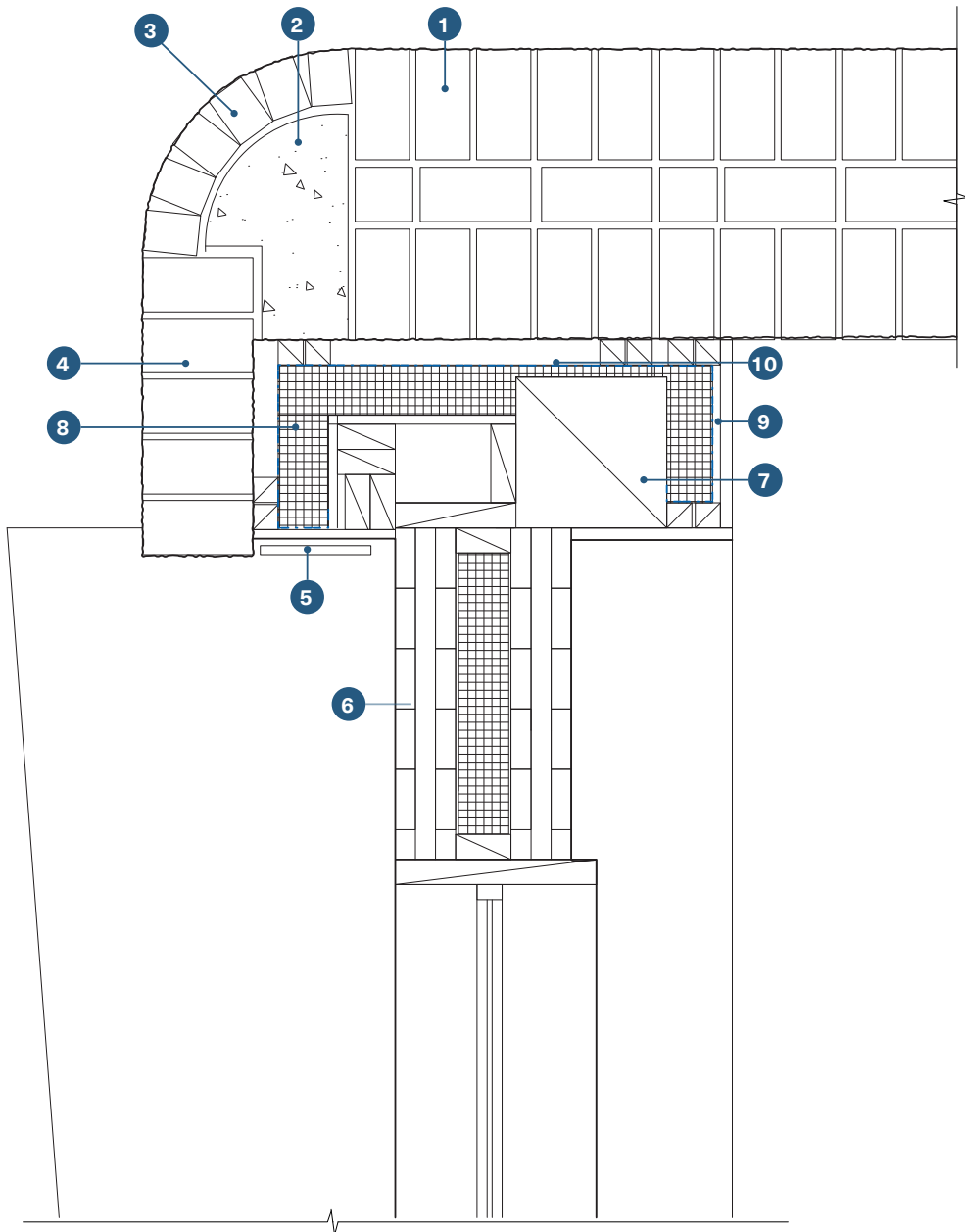
From the roof to the floor, the existing building is adapted in negotiation with its contemporary use. The design removes the existing roof in the Germination Barn, (its trusses are heavy and restrictive of head height, and it is uninsulated). A new half-hipped roof with elevated purlins expands the useable volume. The half-hip increases the height of the south facing facade, allowing for a new clerestory window to spread light throughout the interior.

The internal structures work symbiotically with the primary structure, using internal windows, translucent walkways and double height space to continue the spread of light and communicative sight-lines.



Interface between masonry structural opening and timber frame.

- 1: Existing brick wall
- 2: Extruded lime and recycled aggregate to form curve
- 3: Brick headers to create curve
- 4: Brick Facing
- 5: Brick slips against backing board
- 6: CLT Panels
- 7: 300x300mm Glulam post
- 8: 100mm Isolair wood fibre insulation
- 9: Breathable membrane
- 10: 50mm breather gap



The south-east facing elevation now greets the sun with ribbons of glazing, and a translucent roof cone. All these external adaptations are in service to the internal spaces which now access enhanced light, height and sight-lines.